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SAN FRANCISCO ART ASSOCIATION
BULLETIN

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Detail of Mural. Fleishhacker Mother House, San Francisco. *A W.P.A. Federal Art Project.*
By DOROTHY PUCCINELLI.

Government Art Today

By H. Q. DRISCOLL

ALL artists in America are conscious of the intensive paternalism now being practiced by this government in regard to the arts. What is the future of this movement? Is it a movement which artists should support and defend, or is it a movement which may throttle and control the artist to the extent of destroying his creative independence and frustrating the natural art expression of the American people?

State paternalism is increasing in all fields and it would be unreasonable to believe that art could escape this trend and it is probably not desirable that art should escape it. If art is to fully develop in this country it must go along with the people in a natural growth embracing all of society. If that growth is toward collectivization and socialization it would be foolish of the artists to oppose a state paternalism toward art which trends in that direction. The main thing is to keep a vigilant eye on every phase of such paternalism and to oppose inadequate or bad administration and to fight every move to censor or control the artist in his creative work.

A brief review of the present relation between art, artist and state in several European countries may be useful to artists of this country in their own efforts to shape and perfect the relations between thmselves and their government.

Mussolini felt that art in full flower under his patronage would help prove him a conquering hero worthy of the future's praise. He organized the Union of Fascist Artists. Artists belonging to this union are allowed to compete for state prizes, commissions and other awards, jobs, favors, etc. No other guarantees, pensions, privileges, insurance, or aid is provided. Mussolini merely monopolizes art. It need hardly be said that the art produced in Italy today under this system is nothing but the most atrocious baroque. One must see to believe.

Under Hitler, in Germany and Austria, a similar system is in force. The artist is not compelled to join the official union but he has no rights as an artist if he refuses to join. He cannot, in other words, exhibit his paintings without official permission. He cannot compete for government or any other public awards or commissions. He cannot receive prizes in public exhibits. He cannot teach in public or private institutions.

Beyond the organizational field which enables him to control art production and distribution, Hitler has entered the field of esthetic theory setting up a doctrine governing the fixed and necessary character of art—objective imitation of nature. It is not surprising, therefore, to learn that no art is thus being created in Germany today and that none of the best German artists, so far, has joined the ridiculous Hitler union.

France reveals some interesting art-and-state developments. Most important among these is a law which sets aside two and one-half percent of the budget for all official constructions as a fixed amount which must be spent on art of some kind for the decoration of the buildings. This is no protection of art but it is a protection for the mural painters, sculptors, etc., who are highly organized and make such work a closed-shop monopoly. The old forms of state recognition of artists who have achieved long records of brilliant production still prevail. Pensions, commissions, academy positions, honors with annuities, etc., are maintained. Government galleries are available to artists of all esthetic and political movements. Artists unions are numerous and take an active interest in the economic position and rewards of the artist.

France, officially, seems to grant to the artists a large part of what the artists prove themselves able and willing to demand. This is traditional French policy. The policy of the artists is also typically French—to demand as little as possible from government, thus maintaining a certain degree of creative independence.

The most adequately social state among Europe's democracies, the Spanish Republic, takes an active interest in art and artist through the Ministry of Culture. No definite program of art projects is pursued, but every project which is suggested by artists or public officials is carefully considered and, if possible, carried out as a regular commission.

(Concluded on page 5, col. 1)

Thank you, Mr. Forster

THE BULLETIN is indebted to Mr. Paul Forster, instructor in Commercial Art and Illustration at the California School of Fine Arts, for its new design as presented this month. The new masthead, using Corvinus Bold type, and the text in Bodoni Book, presents, we feel, a restrained yet distinguished make-up. We take this opportunity of expressing our appreciation of Mr. Forster's contribution.

New Members

Active Artist—Mrs. Katherine Gillespie (reinstated), Mrs. Dorothy Rieber Joralemon, Mr. Miles E. Holmes, Mr. William Ritschell, Mr. Timothy M. Wulff (reinstated).

Associate Artist—Italo E. D'Andrea, Merle De Coux, Mr. Luke E. Gibney, Miss Helen Neumann.

Members' Exhibitions

The following exhibitions were held in the Art Association Galleries at the San Francisco Museum of Art during the summer months:

Victor Arnautoff.....May 25 to June 7
Gertrude Mihsfeldt.....June 8 to June 21
John Mottram.....June 22 to July 5
Shotwell G. Wood.....July 6 to July 9
Ray Bertrand.....July 20 to August 2
Harry Rogers.....August 3 to August 16

An exhibition of paintings by Alice B. Chittenden will be held from Aug. 17 to Aug. 30.

NOTE: The Bulletin will endeavor to cover the exhibitions of Art Association members, held during the summer at the San Francisco Museum of Art, at the first possible opportunity.

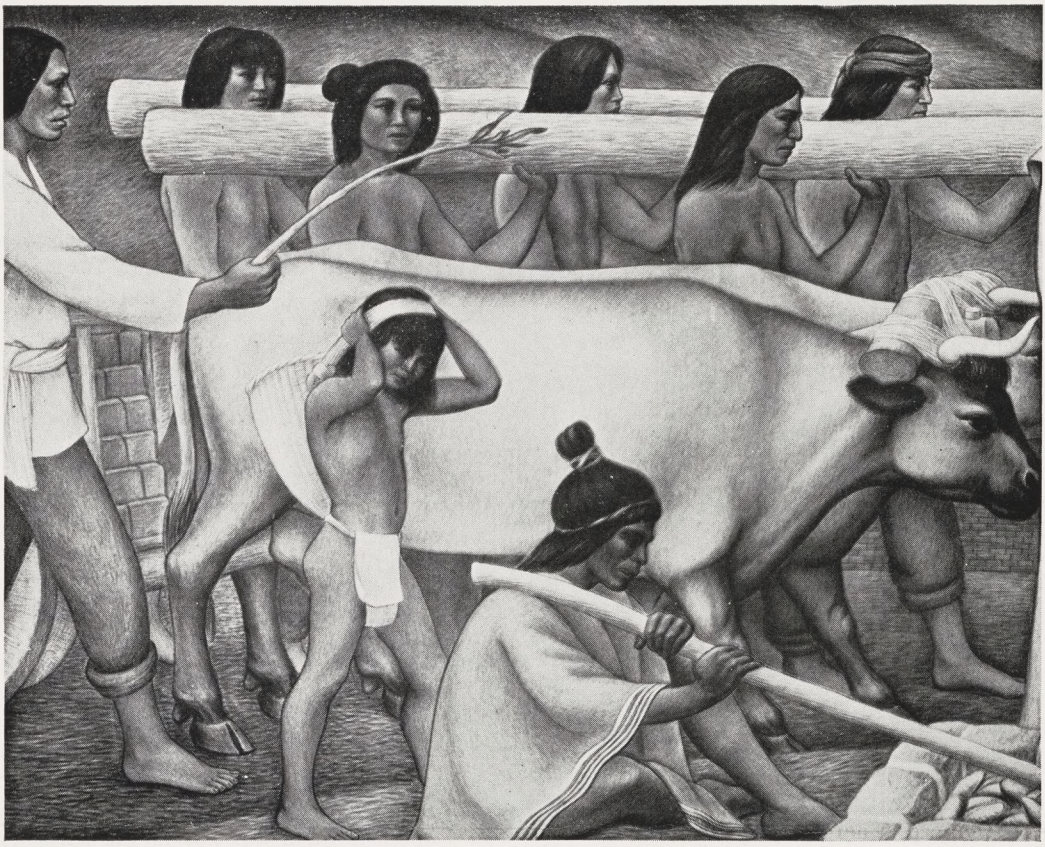
Juries for Graphic Show

Juries for the San Francisco Art Association's Annual Exhibition of Drawings and Prints, which will open on August 17th at the San Francisco Museum of Art, are as follows:

Jury of Selection—Gertrude Partington Albright, Roi Partridge, George Harris, Gene Kloss, Millard Sheets. *Alternates*—Mallette Dean, Charles Suredorf, Esther Meyer.

Jury of Awards—Gertrude Partington Albright, George Harris, Millard Sheets. *Alternate*—Roi Partridge.

Mr. William Hesthal and Mr. Julius Pommer, whose names appeared on the ballot, notified the Chairman of the Council that they would be unable to serve.



Detail from Murals, Mission High School Library, San Francisco. *A W.P.A. Federal Art Project.* *By* EDITH HAMLIN.

Mural Painting

By MAYNARD DIXON

There has been plenty of small-time dogma peddled around of late concerning mural painting. We have heard a lot about significant form, dynamics, golden section, space division, and God knows what. But how often have we heard about the WALL?

My own little dogma is that the wall itself is an essential element of mural design; since it is the wall that brings this design into existence the painter can do no less than respect it; he should put his painting *on the wall* without overloading and obscuring it; he should plan open areas of it as integral parts of his design.

The unknown artists who made the drawings in the caves of Alta Mira and the nameless painters of Egypt and of Ajanta had not lost sight of this first and last principle. They avoided what has now become a foolishly arty and complicated problem by simply laying their design upon the plain surface—and let it go at that.

Fall Term to Open

By LEE RANDOLPH

The California School of Fine Arts will open its next Regular Session on Monday, August 15th, with a full list of courses in the fine and applied arts. In addition to the basic study of drawing, painting, sculpture and design, an effort has been made to increase the value of courses leading to professional outlets for students in the applied arts and crafts. The School welcomes three new members to the faculty, Dr. Grace L. McCann Morley, director of the San Francisco Museum of Art, who will give the course in Art History, William A. Gaw teaches a course in Still Life Painting and Miss Estelle Lane offers a course in Fashion Illustration in connection with the Commercial Art Department under Paul Forster.

Mr. Maurice Sterne remains in San Francisco until the first of the year and during the fall semester will give a special course in Composition, consisting of lectures and criticisms, open to all students.

San Francisco Art Association Bulletin

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The 75th Congress and Art

THE 75th Congress of the United States concluded its 1938 Session by voting down Representative Sirovich's proposal to establish a Federal Bureau of Fine Arts. There was no more revolting story in the art news of the year than the way in which the battle to defeat the bill was waged. The closing days of the session were enlivened by a ballet dance on the floor of the House and the assembled congressmen listened to the absurd statements that money spent on art failed to provide jobs and that appropriations for beauty were appropriations for waste.

So the Congress closed—the Federal Art Projects of the WPA will be continued for the present, but the social status of the American artist remains to be defined.

The 76th Congress convenes in January, 1939. A new Reorganization bill will likely be introduced. There is, even now, formulation of plans by congressmen sympathetic to artists' problems. What sort of action is taken depends largely upon the awareness of the artists, themselves. The time is here for discussion, for an awakened interest in the deeply significant question of the Federal Government and art.

It is impossible to overestimate the influence, not only on the lives of American artists, but on the psychology underlying their work, of a permanent Federal Bureau of Fine Arts. And yet a vast number of the artists and their constituents are uninformed in regard to the proposals that so vitally affect them. The general public knows the WPA as an emergency measure. This widely publicized institution has mysteriously set artists to work. It still persists but has no assured place. That it has shaped the lives of many American artists is unquestioned and that it has been an unparalleled means of disseminating knowledge and understanding of art, especially in rural communities, is established beyond a doubt. Yet when we are faced, as we are now, with the difficult question of determining a long term national policy we find the artists curiously lacking in actual information. It is a strange commentary upon the democratic processes that the people whose interests are at stake fail to take advantage of their opportunities to direct their fortunes.

However, regardless of the indefinite attitude as regards the next step, the artists were clearly divided in respect to the proposals which fell before the last Congress. There were three categories: those who did not want Federal Art subsidies at all; those who would sponsor them but not in the form as proposed by Representative Sirovich and those who felt that the Sirovich bill was a sound and timely effort for government recognition of artists.

Between the first and the latter two there exists a cleavage of opinion which is impossible of compromise. Either we have Federal patronage of art or we don't. If we do—and there seems little possibility that we will not—the question is, what kind do we want?

Three bills came before the last Congress. One was embodied in the Reorganization bill, the second was Representative Sirovich's and the third was introduced simultaneously in both houses by Senator Pepper and Representative Coffee. The latter, because it was preceded in the calendar by the Sirovich Bill, was never brought to vote. What will happen in the next Congress is impossible to predict, save that the problem will be the same and the answers will be redrafted in the light of the criticism of the three bills already proposed. An intelligent analysis of the part the government has played in the rehabilitation of the artist and in the development of the Art consciousness of the American people is important and timely. The artists can scarcely afford to overlook a situation that will so assuredly influence their destiny. M. R.

Hokusai

"THE old man mad with painting," Hokusai,
Sat by an open window in the dawn.
A flight of early swallows darted by—
His brush their pattern caught ere they were gone.
A comely barefoot maiden came apace,
And now we see her as the master saw,
The sprightliness and grace of all her race,
For all time swiftly traced, without a flaw.
Near ninety years he worked, and grew in power
To see life's beauty, and define its flower.
The lust for gold passed ever o'er his head,
Yet he was fed, and not alone by bread.
"The old man mad with painting," was he mad?
If so, O would that I such madness had.

—TIMOTHY MILTON WULFF.

Government Art Today

(Continued from page 2, col. 1)

It is also of interest to note that Spain, unlike the countries already mentioned, set up no bars of race or nationality in considering artists for such commissions. Spanish artists are not neglected, however, and one may say that no Spanish artist who wished to execute a mural, for example, was ever denied the opportunity by the Spanish Republic.

A state movement of international significance was just coming to fruition in Spain at the outbreak of the civil war. I refer to the effort to restore works of art of all types and periods of the past, including architectural and sculptural masterpieces. For this purpose special schools had been inaugurated to teach art students the actual methods by which those works were originally created. Fresco, mozaic, tempera, polychrome sculpture, stained glass, metal-work, gilded and painted carved plaster, tile, pottery, etc., were among the old methods the schools were reviving. Although the principal purpose was restoration, rather than original creation, it may be supposed that artists who had learned to use such methods would continue to use them in their own professional and creative work.

Russia offers a most illuminating glimpse into the future relations between artist and state. All professional artists belong to unions established on a regional basis. The unions are subsidized by the government. With the funds provided, the unions erect living quarters and studios to be rented to artists. Unions act as agents for the artist and also as his direct employer. The artist, in return, contributes approximately one-third of his annual production to his union. The union attempts to sell his work and also helps the artist to dispose of his remaining work in the open market.

Artists qualify for membership in the unions on a professional basis after adequate official education. It may be said that almost the whole history of art, as well as new movements, may be seen in contemporary work in Soviet Russia, with formalized realism and expressionism predominating.

It seems that the artist inevitably will be involved with government in all countries before many years have passed. It has happened in our own country in a limited way and there is no reason to suppose that official intervention in art will become less intense here in the future. We may expect even greater efforts to relate art, artist, and society. What those efforts will be and how deeply they will concern the artist is a matter for him to decide now. Whether he will be a victim or a beneficiary still fortunately depends on what the artist himself prefers to be. Through a united and determined activity American artists should be able to set up desirable objectives and standards, social and creative, and see to it that their government gives them every possible kind of assistance and a minimum of suppressive opposition.

Museum Extension Successful

A series of extension exhibitions of fine color reproductions was sent, under the auspices of the Educational Activities of the San Francisco Museum of Art, to 43 centers in Northern California from Redding to Fresno.

The six exhibitions forming the series, and planned to teach art appreciation very simply as a foundation for further study, were made possible through the Carnegie Grant to the San Francisco Museum of Art. These exhibitions were visited by 100,000 people.

Phelan Traveling Scholarship Awarded to Una McCann

Una McCann, awarded the Phelan Traveling Scholarship for 1938 by the Board of Directors of the Art Association, left for Europe July 23. Miss McCann, who entered the California School of Fine Arts in 1932, is primarily interested in fresco and will devote most of her time to a study of that medium in Italy. She will first travel through the Southern States, will spend a few months in New York, thence to Montreal and London. From London her itinerary includes all the important European art centers before her final establishment in Italy.

The awarding of this magnificent opportunity to Una McCann was based on her student work at the Art School, her drawings of the Bay Bridge during its entire period of construction and her general stamina and ability. Miss McCann is 25 years old.

Jack Wilkinson, recipient of last year's honor, is now established in a studio in Paris.

By a popular vote of visiting sculptors, Raymond Puccinelli of San Francisco was chosen Guest of Honor for 1939 at the Third Annual Exhibition of Sculpture held during May and June at the Oakland Art Gallery.

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Current Exhibitions in Local Galleries

Amberg-Hirth, 165 Post Street: Hand turned articles in wood including bowls, bases, etc. Hand wrought jewelry in silver by Margaret DePatta.

Artists' Cooperative League, 166 Geary Street: Water colors by Sorgatz until August 15.

California Palace of the Legion of Honor, Lincoln Park: Paintings by American Abstract Artists. Painting by Leon Kroll opening August 8.

Courvoisier Galleries, 133 Geary Street: Walt Disney's original painting in celluloid for "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs."

Paul Elder Gallery, 239 Post Street: Water colors by Henry Scott, August 13 to September 3. Paintings by Augusta Rathbone, September 5 to 26.

M. H. DeYoung Memorial Museum, Golden Gate Park: French silverware from three centuries. Photos of the California Mid-winter Fair.

Duncan-Vail Company, 116 Kearny Street: Academy of Advertising Art until August 17. Sport drawings by Lyle Brown.

Gump Galleries, 246 Post Street: Opening August 15. Water colors and oils by Hamilton Wolf.

San Francisco Museum of Art, War Memorial, Civic Center: San Francisco Art Association Annual Graphic Show August 17 to September 18. California Ceramic Show to August 25. One-Man Show, Alice Chittenden; August 17 through August 30. Sculptures by Vera Bernhard and Paintings by Margery Nahl, August 31 through September 13th.

California Earth Colors Utilized in Fresco

Earthen colors taken from the vicinity of Oakland were used in the fresco murals by John Haley and Beckford Young, dedicated July 23, at Government Island, Alameda.

Seeking to find better pigments for the many murals now being completed, the WPA Federal Art Project discovered the colors of the California earth to be far superior to many pigments heretofore employed.

Aging since time immemorial, and treated in nature's crucible of heat, pressure, and moisture, experiments under the direction of Miss Charlotte Morton have proved that these colors will not fade.

In the Oakland workshop of the Federal Art Project new colors are being ground and tested every day, and it is hoped that a complete color scale will soon be available.

California School of Fine Arts: Student exhibition, to August 14. Contemporary painting and sculpture to August 21. Paintings by Max Beckman, August 16 to September 18. Paintings by Alice Chittenden.